

**Research and Development Classification Process Survey Results
For Session 4 Participants**

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The Research and Development Classification Process (RDCP) was established in 2001 as the process by which the work and qualifications of high-grade scientists and engineers employed by NASA Langley Research Center are classified and any subsequent personnel actions are effected. The key characteristic of this process is application of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) classification guides and standards through a consensus decision-making process of peer scientists and engineers. A panel of such peers is convened to provide technical review of the assignment, impact, and qualifications that the employee brings to the position. RDCP panel chairs and members are non-supervisory Langley employees. The Office of Human Resources (OHR) effects the recommendations of the panels in terms of updating the employee's position classification and any resulting promotion. The selection of employees for review in each session was determined by random weighted assignment and some limited management requests for those already identified as ready for review or needing deferral. All of the approximately 800 employees initially assigned to a session will be reviewed between the summer of 2001 and the summer of 2004. Four sessions have been conducted to date (starting in August 2001), reviewing a total of 309 employees in about 56 branches over 32 panels involving a total of 216 employees as panel members. The process has resulted in 125 employees' jobs classified at their current grade, 147 classified at the next highest grade, one classified below grade, with the remainder to be reviewed again due to either insufficient information or appropriate Guide not applied. This paper describes the results of a survey conducted with participants of the fourth RDCP session and briefly compares it with results of an earlier survey of session 3 participants. The purpose of the survey was to provide information about how well the process is working and where it may need improvement.

A simple survey (see copy in Appendix A) was posted on the internal LaRC web for three weeks (October 28 through November 29, 2002) in order to obtain feedback from RDCP participants in Session 4. Responses to the 18 items were anonymous and voluntary.

Session 4 Survey Results

Sixty out of the approximately 115 Session 4 participants responded to the survey: 12 out of 25 Branch Heads, 27 out of 41 panel members, and 21 out of 49 reviewees. Table 1 is a summary of the responses for all of the questionnaire items. (Items 5 through 16 were ratings from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with 0 meaning no opinion or not applicable.)

Table 1. Summary of Responses to Questionnaire Items 1 through 17 for Session 4

Item No.	Item Name	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Session participated	60	na	4.0	na	na
2	Guide used	60	1.0	2.0	na	na
3	Hours spent	59	2.0	120	51.20	26.06
4	RDCP Role	60	1.0	3.0	na	na
5	Fair selection	60	1.0	5.0	2.98	1.43
6	Adequate training	60	1.0	5.0	3.55	1.17
7	Adequate handbook	60	1.0	5.0	3.48	1.16
8	Understandable process	60	1.0	5.0	3.67	.86
9	Clear criteria	60	1.0	5.0	3.18	1.17
10	Conducted consistently	60	1.0	5.0	3.27	1.22
11	Improved classification process	60	1.0	5.0	2.93	1.48
12	Improved promotion process	60	1.0	5.0	3.42	1.56
13	Improved morale	60	1.0	5.0	2.98	1.32
14	Adequate time	60	1.0	5.0	3.83	1.14
15	Agree with panel	60	1.0	5.0	3.77	1.24
16	Report adequate	60	1.0	5.0	3.58	.92
17	Reviewee decision category	21	1.0	4.0	na	na

The average number of hours spent on the RDCP was about 54 but with statistically significant differences among branch heads (20 hours), panel members (53 hours), and reviewees (67 hours), with standard deviations, between 15 and 26 hours.

In general, the average rating scores are between 2.9 and 3.8. The average rating score of at least 3.0 (neither disagree nor agree) is used here as an arbitrary criteria for areas which are doing well. All but three items had average ratings greater than or equal to 3.0. Even these three items, Fair Selection (item 5), Improved Classification Process (item 11), and Improved Morale (item 13) had average ratings very close to 3.0 (2.98, 2.93, and 2.98, respectively).

For Fair Selection and Improved Classification Process, it was the reviewees' average scores that were lowest, 2.71 and 2.57, respectively. The branch head and panel members' scores were 3.00 or greater for these items: 3.42 and 3.00 for Fair Selection and 3.25 and 3.07 for Improved Classification Process, respectively. For Improved Morale, the average scores were essentially the same among all three roles, between 3.04 and 2.90.

The fact that 71 percent of all the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the panel results is a very good indicator that RDCP is a process that provides valid results. Of the reviewees, 12 of the 21 respondents had been evaluated as above grade. They gave an average rating of 4.25 for Agree with Panel Decision (item 15), indicating strong agreement with the panel results. And, even the 7 respondents who had been evaluated at grade had an average rating of 3.14, which indicated they did not disagree with the panel results. Furthermore, the 12 responding Branch Heads had an average rating of 3.75 for this item, indicating that they did not disagree with the panel results. In fact, 75 percent of the branch heads agreed or strongly agreed with the panel results.

When Improved Morale (item 13) average ratings within reviewees were compared with the actual panel decision results, there was a significant difference by panel decision category. Not surprisingly, those reviewees who received promotions gave an average rating of 3.3 to the question about improved morale, whereas those who remained in their current grade gave an average rating of 2.7 for this item.

Table 2. Practically Significant Correlation Coefficients ($r \geq .45$, $p = .00$) for Session 4 participants

Item	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16
Q3	1	.64	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Q4		1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Q5			1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Q6				1	.66	.47	-	-	-	.57	-	-	-	-
Q7					1	.61	.47	.52	-	.61	.54	-	-	-
Q8						1	.65	.54	-	.45	.46	-	-	-
Q9							1	.51	-	-	-	-	-	-
Q10								1	-	.54	.49	-	.49	.46
Q11									1	.62	-	-	-	-
Q12										1	.58	-	-	-
Q13											1	.48	.54	-
Q14												1	-	-
Q15													1	.81
Q16														1

Responses were examined in terms of correlations among items. A statistically significant correlation coefficient equal to or greater than $r = .45$ was considered to be of practical or meaningful significance. From Table 2, above, items 6(Training), 7 (Handbook), and 8(RDCP understandable process) are correlated, which is to be expected as they are all related to training and understanding the process. Items 7 (Handbook) and Item 12 (Improvement over old promotion system) correlates with five items, more than any other items. Correlations of item 10 (RDCP conducted consistently) were found with items dealing with RDCP being an improvement over the promotion processes, but were also found to correlate with improved morale and agreeing with the panel's decision with adequate explanation by the panel report (items 12, 13, 15 and 16, respectively). And,

some of these items were correlated with each other. Although the time spent working on RDCP (item 3) and the role of the survey respondent (item 4) were significantly correlated with each other, neither one was correlated with any other item.

In a further analysis, the items were examined according to the role of the survey respondent. For Branch Heads, in Table 2a., fewer significant correlations were found. In general, those correlations that were significant were also significant across all roles. The exceptions are that there were significant correlations for Adequate Panel report (item 16) with RDCP Improved Promotion process (item 12) and with Improved Morale (item 13) that weren't found overall. In fact, item 16 had the most correlations for the Branch Heads. However, even though having an adequate panel report is related to viewing RDCP as an improved promotion process and having improved morale, as well as other items, further analysis (linear stepwise regression) on Improved Morale for the Branch Heads indicated that Agreeing with Panel Decision (item 15) explained most of the variance (61%) in the scores for Improved Morale and that the other items did not significantly explain any variance.

Table 2a. Practically Significant Correlation Coefficients ($r \geq .45, p \leq .05$) for Session 4 participants as Branch Heads

Item	Q3	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16
Q3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Q5		1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Q6			1	.60	.83	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Q7				1	.63	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Q8					1	-	.61	-	-	-	-	-	-
Q9						1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Q10							1	-	.70	-	-	-	.68
Q11								1	-	-	-	-	-
Q12									1	.61	-	-	.62
Q13										1	.70	.82	.77
Q14											1	.70	-
Q15												1	.88
Q16													1

There were more significant correlations among the Panel Members' responses (see Table 2b) to the survey questions than there were for the Branch Heads, but the most significant correlations were found for the Reviewees' responses (see Table 2c).

For the Panel Members, item 13 (Improved Morale) had the most correlations. It was correlated with seven other items. However, in a further analysis (linear stepwise regression) improved morale was most explained by Adequate RDCP Handbook (item 7) (40% of the variance) with some additional explanation by Adequate Time to work on RDCP (item 14) and Agreeing with Panel Decision (item 15).

Table 2b. Practically Significant Correlation Coefficients ($r \geq .45, p \leq .05$) for Session 4 participants as Panel Members

Item	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16
Q3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.50
Q5			1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Q6				1	.57	-	-	-	.48	-	-	-	-	.56
Q7					1	.71	.62	.53	-	-	.62	-	-	-
Q8						1	.66	.62	-	-	.51	-	-	-
Q9							1	.54	-	-	-	-	-	-
Q10								1	-	-	.46	-	-	-
Q11									1	.77	.54	-	-	.45
Q12										1	.49	-	-	-
Q13											1	-	.51	.45
Q14												1	-	-
Q15													1	.54
Q16														1

For Reviewees, Conducted Consistently (item 10) had the most correlations, nine, with other items. The highest correlations were for Improved Promotion Process (item 12) and Clear Criteria (item 9). Improved Promotion Process was also highly correlated with Improved Morale (item 13). In fact, in further analysis, Improved Morale was most explained by Improved Promotion Process (item 12) with 60% of the variance of those scores explained. In turn, Improved Promotion Process was most explained by Conducted Consistently (item 10) (66% of that variance) with no other items significantly explaining any additional variance.

Table 2c. Practically Significant Correlation Coefficients ($r \geq .45, p \leq .05$) for Session 4 participants as Reviewees

Item	Q3	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17
Q3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Q5		1	-	.51	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Q6			1	.69	.62	.52	.53	.47	.78	.46	.59	-	-	-
Q7				1	.46	-	.57	-	.79	.62	.65	-	-	-.50
Q8					1	.71	.52	-	.46	.52	-	-	.47	-
Q9						1	.65	-	.46	-	-	.62	.48	-
Q10							1	.58	.73	.54	-	.55	.56	-
Q11								1	.66	-	-	-	-	
Q12									1	.70	.54	-	-	-
Q13										1	.56	.47	-	-.48
Q14											1	-	-	-
Q15												1	.85	-.77
Q16													1	-.70
Q17														1

Summary of Comments

Summary of comments received by the respondents are in Appendix B. In general the comments dealt with comparison of the RDCP to perceptions of the old promotion process, concerns about the time involved, and concerns about consistency. Both positive and negative comments were received. As a result of this feedback, some changes were made for Session 5, especially with respect to more examples being provided in the training for all participants and a better explanation of Supervision Received. Also, a training session for all interested people, not just those in the next session, is set for January 2003.

Comparison of Session 4 Survey Responses with Session 3

Overall, there is an improvement in RDCP ratings as indicated by the responses to the Session 4 survey compared to Session 3. (In general, session 4 shows improvement over all earlier session surveys. Results of Session 3 and earlier surveys can be found at <http://ohr.larc.nasa.gov/RDCP.html>.)

In general, the average rating scores for Session 4 survey responses were between 2.9 to 3.8 and Session 3 survey responses were between 2.7 and 4.1. While the highest ratings are down a little, the lowest ratings are up a little. For Session 4, all items except for three items had average ratings greater than or equal to 3.0; Fair Selection (item 5) 2.98, Improved Classification Process (item 11) 2.93, and Improved Morale (item 13) 2.98. And, because these three items were all between 2.93 and 2.98, they were only marginally below 3.0. For Session 3, although there were only two items below 3.0, Conducted Consistently (item 10) and Improved Morale (item 13), their average ratings were 2.65 and 2.69, respectively. In Session 4, the lowest scored item was Improved Classification Process, but the lowest scored item in Session 3 was Improved Morale. The score for the latter increased slightly in Session 4 while the score for the former was slightly lower in Session 4 than that for Session 3 (2.93 vs. 3.02, respectively).

However, even with these trends, there were only two items for which the average scores varied significantly between the two RDCP sessions, according to an analysis of variance (ANOVA). These were Conducted Consistently (item 10) and Adequate Panel Reports (item 16). For both items, average scores improved from Session 3 to Session 4; Conducted Consistently increased from 2.65 to 3.27 and Adequate Panel Reports increased from 3.10 to 3.58. The increased score for Conducted Consistently was particularly important as that item was lower than 3.0 for Session 3 and contributes significantly to improved morale for reviewees.

Conclusions

The RDCP is a peer review process to determine the appropriate grade level for person-in-the-job positions. Four sessions have been conducted to date (starting in August 2001), reviewing a total of 309 employees in about 56 branches over 32 panels involving a total of 216 employees as panel members. The process has resulted in 125 employees' jobs classified at their current grade, 147 classified at the next highest grade, one classified below grade, with the remainder to be reviewed again due to either insufficient information or appropriate Guide not applied. This paper described the results of a survey conducted with participants of the fourth RDCP session and compared it with results of session 3 participants. The survey responses indicate increasingly greater understanding and satisfaction among RDCP participants. However, future changes will address improved training in describing the selection process for all participants as well as continued training in the criteria for classification. Efforts will continue to ensure as much consistency as possible among the peer groups and across the RDCP sessions.

APPENDIX A

Research and Classification Process Questionnaire

In order to improve the Research and Development Classification Process, feedback from all the participants is critical, whether you are a reviewee, a panel member, or a Branch Head. The survey below was designed to gather that feedback yet be quick and easy to do. While your participation in this survey is completely voluntary, your response would help form a more accurate picture of how the RDCP is progressing. Your responses are completely anonymous. The data will be analyzed and presented as representative of the entire sample, such as ranges, averages, variances, and percentages. This survey will close November 29 at 5:00pm. The results, but not the data, of the survey will be made available to all RDCP participants and will be posted on the RDCP website: <http://ohr.larc.nasa.gov/RDCP.html>. This survey, or one similar to it, will be repeated for each Session. Please respond to all items by clicking on the appropriate answer or by typing in the information requested. If you have participated in the RDCP in more than one role, such as a reviewee one session and a panel member another session, please fill out the survey twice, once for each role. Thank you for your help in improving the RDCP!

Section I

1. In which Session did you participate in the RDCP?
Session 1
Session 2
2. Please indicate which Guide you used for the RDCP.
Research Grade Evaluation Guide
Equipment Development Grade Evaluation Guide
Other
3. Please estimate the amount of time, in hours, you spent working on the RDCP.
4. Please indicate your participant role.
Branch Head/Supervisor
Panel Member
Reviewee

Section II

Scale (0=No Opinion or Don't Know, 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Disagree nor Agree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree):

5. The method used to select the Session for a person's review is fair to most RDCP AST researchers and developers :
6. Your RDCP training was adequate :
7. The RDCP Handbook was adequate :
8. The RDCP process is understandable :

9. The RDCP process provides clear criteria for classification of job duties :
10. The RDCP process is conducted consistently for most researchers, to your knowledge
11. The RDCP process is an improvement over the old classification process
12. The RDCP process is an improvement over the old promotion process :
13. Your morale has improved due to implementation of the RDCP process :
14. You were allowed adequate time to work on the RDCP :
15. You agree with the panel's decision(s) (regardless of role):
16. The panel evaluation report was adequate to explain the scores received:

17. If you were a reviewee, please indicate the panel's decision.
 - Above Grade
 - At Grade
 - Below Grade
 - Other

18. Please provide any general comments or explanations of above responses here.

APPENDIX B

Summary of RDCP Survey Comments from Session 4 RDCP Participants

Nine pages of text comments were received as part of the 60 survey responses. Many respondents made one or more comments. The comments seemed to cover both ends of the same spectra, that is, for every point someone made a negative comment about, at least one or more positive comment was made, and vice versa. Some of the comments are general dissatisfaction with having a RDCP type process versus a different system. However, many comments were about the RDCP itself. Most of the comments were of the same general categories as those from session 1 and 2, except that for session 3 there was little reference to the adequacy or appropriateness of the classification guide itself.

Below is a listing representative of all the comments received. (The RDCP Advisory Committee received a copy of the complete, unedited comments.) Similar comments were received regardless of role of participant. Some of these concerns have already been addressed as of this writing, but plans are being made to address as many more as possible.

General –

- RDCP is better than old promotion process because everyone gets a "turn at bat".
- The RDCP process is a vast improvement over the previous promotion process.
- Process was excellent and fair
- Old system needed improvement but not the radical change we have seen.
- Merely lifting restrictions on the number of promotions and letting branch heads promote their people worthy of a promotion, with some form of recourse for dissatisfied employees, would have been the solution to increase morale.
- Will inevitably lead to a drift toward individual research. While such a course will enhance the personal fulfillment of Langley scientists, it will also diminish the overall contribution of Langley to science and the public good.
- Many fellow workers have gotten promotions that they have earned with their good work, that they would not have obtained under the old political "smoke-filled" room approach.
- The RDCP process adds more fairness to the promotion process.
- RDCP process was outstanding and I am proud to have participated in it.
- The RDCP seems to work very well for those who are a reasonably good fit to the model, which is geared toward research, and they appear to be getting rewarded appropriately. For those who are not a good fit to the model, the best outcome from RDCP seems to be to avoid being recommended for demotion.
- Had doubts going into the process, but in the end it appeared to work pretty well.

Managerial Responsibility-

- Hope the next step is to replace the panels with the Branch Heads.
- GS-15s should be reviewed by the Branch Head/Competency Director and/or senior staff members.
- If the money is somehow now available for these raises, the senior staff ought to step up and do their job.

- Branch heads don't know the RDCP process and can't/don't help the reviewee's very much.
- It would be nice to see the branch head take a more active role in the process. Can the branch head come to the panel deliberations to represent the reviewee?
- It is a huge mistake to reward people for serving on a panel. This also encourages advocacy because that is one way that the IDR can appear to do a good job (to successfully advocate a promotion for their reviewers).
- Managers should do their jobs and stop taking our time to do it for them.
- The line management should be allowed to promote to higher grades as warranted. That way, the goals, rewards and direction within organizations will be consistent and the ones being paid to make these decisions will be held accountable for those directions.
- It is not fair to put the panel into the position of having to sort out difficulties with downgrading people who are underachieving or are overrated.

Time –

- It is a very heavy drain on personnel resources in an environment where many people are already stressed by overwork or inability to keep up with the demands of project schedules and goals.
- The steady state is not going to significantly reduce the amount of time spent writing the packages or evaluating the packages.
- The amount of documentation requires a significant amount of time for the distillation of all of the information in order to understand it all in the proper context. The lead-time from training to package submittal WAS provided and is critical to providing a truly reliable system. Warn against a thought or desire to shorten the lead-time in future years once everyone is "used to the system".
- The cost in man-hours appears to be much higher than the old process. Improvements in efficiency and reduced support time should occur as the process matures.
- Time spent as an RDCP panel member adversely impacts research schedule.

Consistency and Quality–

- Great deal of variability between the panels, causing variability in interpretation of packages, even between "similar" individuals.
- Because the panel chairs must be existing GS-15's, and because most of them earned their grade under the "old" system, they inflict the old standards on the packages, instead of taking them at face value (i.e., "I did it the hard way, writing journal papers, and I think everyone else must do the same.")
- In the RDCP panel training, we were told to broaden our interpretation of the guide, and not just award those who have "academic" research credentials. Unfortunately, when the panel is agonizing over a person's rating, it's too easy to fall back onto a strict, literal interpretation of the standards given in the guide.
- The guide is not always very clear when it comes to distinguishing between degrees, particularly on Factor II of the RGEG.
- Panels made up of different individuals are going to interpret a RDCP write up differently.

- Having RDCP Manager and OHR rep in on every panel should help a lot to make the whole process more consistent since panels can vary in emphasis too much.
- Despite all the RDCP specs for a grade, the system is still very subjective. Reviewers have varying definitions of words like 'innovative', 'complex', 'conventional.'
- The RDCP process is not equitable in that the outcome is very dependent upon the skills of the in-depth reviewer for the person being reviewed.
- Difficulty understanding how someone who may not be familiar with my type of work can consistently make as accurate of an assessment of the difficulty or originality of that work as my management.
- Most individuals are taking the process seriously and committing the required time and effort to provide their best evaluation, but there are some that aren't.
- Langley does not have a large enough pool of researches with knowledge in the specific technical areas of each employee, which vary widely even within a branch, to create a fair peer review process.
- Evaluations are very fair. Panels assign equal weight to a reviewee's contribution to group efforts and his/her own research
- The review panel conducted an excellent in-depth review of my submission and work.
- One's in-depth reviewer has a great impact on the panel's collective interpretation and understanding of what the written package means.
- The panel members know that their review is upcoming and don't want to be known as a negative factor in a reviewee's classification.
- Although a poor or great presentation can influence the panel, the facts will prevail.

Training-

- Have a suggested "Standard In-Depth Review Report Form" for panel members. Some reports were much more detailed and useful than other reports.
- The job classification criteria should be rewritten to be more clear and applicable to what we do at NASA.
- The guidance given for conducting the in depth reviews was essentially non-existent. The rules, content, and training materials are still evolving, which makes it difficult to do the evaluation and to prepare the package.
- It should be emphasized that the in-depth reviewees are merely messengers and that the outcome of the panel is based on facts and not a reflection of the in-depth reviewer.
- Struggled with what information to put where in the writeup. The process would be much less painful and likely more consistent if very clear and specific requirements are given as to information required for each element.
- If the submission is desired to be shorter, better criteria must be given as to "what is and what is not" important.
- The process was very well documented and described.
- This situation might be helped by having the training discuss more about the differences between guides and the personnel traits the guides are looking for at different grade levels.

Process –

- Suggest revising the rules so that only LISTS (publications, etc.) aren't included in the 10-page limit, so that ALL narratives MUST be in the first 10 pages. This will significantly reduce the time impact on reviewees, branch heads, and reviewers .
- GS-13s should not be on the panel, or at least should not be doing the in-depth review. They should not be voting on a GS-15.
- In general, the feedback given to reviewees helps them understand what is expected to gain promotion. I wonder why those reviewees who don't expect to gain promotion or demotion should spend much time on the process.
- It does not seem a fair or appropriate process for those who have been heavily involved in project and development work, particularly where publications have not been supported nor encouraged by management.
- It worked OK to be an IDR for someone outside my specific branch but still within the peer group. Had a difficult time understanding the difficulty of the job, but was able to get this information during the in depth review.
- Do not like the timing of the peer panels to be associated with the budget -- it has put some people in the position of supposedly being recommended for early review, but the time it has taken to get back into the system is closer to 2 years (particularly due to the delayed panel reviews).
- Would be nice to have one career description with the points that support the different factors highlighted. The position descriptions seem to be particularly ineffectual. Supervision received is also a very difficult to assess.
- The HR person should be more vocal in helping the panel members in distinguishing between the levels for each factor. Absent strong guidance, panel members tend to interpret things very loosely
- The evaluation guides while used in the past were virtually unknown to most people I have talked with, setting up the perception of 2 standards, the old and the new. There has been only 1 year now to adjust one's work to the 'new ' standard which has hurt morale to some degree.
- LaRC has started a process with the guidelines for really what should be a high GS position (GS-14) not defined. You have to interpolate between a GS-13 definition and that of a GS-15, that is if you can understand all the subtleties. The process is resulting in an inflation of the average GS level to a GS-14.
- Imposing a "secret" panel to review researches does not create an environment for impartial decisions to be made on the mere basis of employee credentials.
- Reply of insufficient information was not satisfactory to allow rebuttal or rewriting of the RDCP write-up. At a minimum, reviewers' comments and partial scores that were received should be passed on in areas where sufficient information was found. There was no information sufficiently relevant to the scoring criteria to give an adequate direction for management or the reviewee to know what the reviewers were thinking.